

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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 IN RE: :
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 THE EL FARO INCIDENT OFF : NTSB Accident No.
 THE COAST OF THE BAHAMAS ON : DCA16MM001
 OCTOBER 1, 2015 :
 :
 ----- :

Interview of: THERESA DAVIDSON

Tuesday,
January 5, 2016

U.S. Coast Guard Office
Portland, Maine

BEFORE:

BRIAN YOUNG, NTSB
MIKE KUCHARSKI, NTSB

This transcript was produced from audio
provided by the National Transportation Safety Board.

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard:

██████████ ██████████
U.S. Coast Guard

On Behalf of the Interviewee:

GREG LINSIN, ESQ.
WILLIAM BENNETT, ESQ., Blank Rome LLP

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(Time not given)

1
2
3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: So the purpose of our
4 NTSB investigation is a complete safety investigation.
5 We want to increase safety. We're not here to assign
6 any fault or blame or any liability. We want to see
7 what we can do to prevent this from happening again.

8 So we, as representing the NTSB, thank you
9 very much for making yourself available and being here
10 and we would like to extend our, you know, complete
11 condolences and we're very sorry how this tragedy has
12 affected you and your family.

13 MS. DAVIDSON: Thank you.

14 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: We are working hard to
15 find out what this probable cause was and how we can
16 prevent it from happening again. So that's our job as
17 NTSB and I know, [REDACTED] --

18 MR. [REDACTED] On behalf of the Coast Guard
19 we feel the same way and we're looking to try to
20 prevent accidents like this from happening in the
21 future.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: Thank you.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: So one of the, kind of
24 the rules an interview is you are allowed to have
25 representation which obviously you've already done. If

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1 we would just ask that you guys not testify for the
2 interviewee and that your comments should be limited
3 and objections are not grounds for the NTSB to refrain
4 from asking questions.

5 So you're here to advise and coach as much
6 as possible. So again, my name is Brian Young. I'm
7 the engineering investigator for the accident. My
8 function in this is to find out about the propulsion
9 system and why it was lost and what that could have
10 done to cause part of the accident.

11 Because I'm local and here I thought it was
12 a good reason to help kind of, you know, establish a
13 relationship being a Mainer and you know sometimes it
14 helps break the ice and most of the questions obviously
15 deck related but I have a little understanding of the
16 nautical part of it. But [REDACTED] and Mike are the real
17 nautical brains of this operation.

18 I'm the guy in the engine room who just gets
19 yelled at by the captain typically. So that's my
20 function as the engineering. And as the NTSB
21 investigation goes we have parties to the
22 investigation. There are people who can provide
23 technical expertise to our investigation and Coast
24 Guard is one, ABS is one and TOTE is one.

25 They are parties to the investigation. So

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1 what we do is we ask people who have technical
2 expertise to provide us with information that we can
3 help solve the probable cause. So that's the different
4 parties in the investigation just so you know.

5 And after the interview today please feel
6 free to ask any questions at any time. We'll answer
7 what we can. And again, this transcript along with all
8 of the other interviews will be part of the public
9 docket which will be released probably months from now.

10 Okay. If at any time you don't understand
11 the question or don't know the answer it's fine. You
12 know, it's, we're not here to grill you. We just want
13 to see what you know and give us as much information as
14 you know to try to help us get the probable cause.

15 And if you need water or a break or need to
16 whatever just, it's, we try to make it as casual as we
17 can and please feel free to just take a break as
18 needed. But if it does come to two hours I do need to
19 go put coins in the machine for my car so I don't get
20 towed away.

21 If you don't mind maybe we'll just introduce
22 ourselves going around the room for the transcription.
23 This is Brian Young with the NTSB.

24 MR. LINSIN: And my name is Greg Linsin, L-
25 I-N-S-I-N. I'm representing Theresa Davidson.

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: Theresa Davidson, wife of the
2 captain.

3 MR. BENNETT: My name is William Bennett.
4 I'm with Blank Rome and I also represent Ms. Davidson.

5 MR. [REDACTED] My name is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I'm
6 a civilian Marine casualty investigator with the United
7 States Coast Guard. I am a licensed Merchant Marine
8 officer.

9 In addition to that I'm working on a human
10 performance group the decisions that were made
11 affecting this accident. And our group chairman is Ms.
12 Carrie Bell. She's not on the call today so I'm
13 representing Ms. Bell also looking at the nautical
14 operations involved.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And on the phone? And,
16 Mike?

17 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Good morning, Mrs.
18 Davidson.

19 MS. DAVIDSON: Good morning.

20 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: My name is Mike
21 Kucharski. I'm the group chairman of operations which
22 is really the nautical type. And just a little side
23 light there you probably maybe already know but I
24 retired out of AMO.

25 I also sailed master and as you probably

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1 heard I was captain on that ship when it was the
2 Northern Lights, when it was converted over and
3 lengthened but not on the container operation and my
4 deep condolences.

5 MS. DAVIDSON: Thank you.

6 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Maybe we can start,
7 would you prefer Mrs. Davidson or Theresa or do you --

8 MS. DAVIDSON: Theresa is fine.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Theresa is fine, okay.
10 Just from my personal background a lot of times when I
11 was out on the ship my wife and I would communicate
12 frequently via the e-mail, the cell phones and whatever
13 technology we had. How often and how did you
14 communicate with your husband when he was working on
15 the ship?

16 MS. DAVIDSON: Almost every day. You know,
17 when he could he would call and when he wasn't within
18 cell range when he couldn't call or text he would e-
19 mail from the ship's e-mail.

20 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And would you
21 communicate mostly when he was in port then via phone?

22 MS. DAVIDSON: When he was in port it was
23 usually texting when he first got into port. He would
24 always tell me he got there safely every single time.
25 And then he would say well I'll call you later when I

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1 have time when we're done and then we would chat a
2 little bit.

3 But he was usually pretty busy when he was
4 in port so there weren't really lengthy conversations.

5 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And how about from the
6 ship would you ever communicate over the Marisat phone,
7 the satellite phone?

8 MS. DAVIDSON: No, he never called me on
9 that. Just e-mails from the ship's e-mail.

10 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And did they have, I
11 remember when I used to sail I had a, they called it
12 chief engineer at blah, blah, blah. I had my own e-
13 mail address. Would he be able to e-mail from his desk
14 or was there like a group for the ship that, a group e-
15 mail or would he have his own personal address?

16 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know. It just said
17 El Faro captain. Was that his own?

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Probably, yes. So it
19 wouldn't be just a general El Faro group or a crew. It
20 would be from the captain, okay.

21 MS. DAVIDSON: Right. I think so.

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And during those
23 e-mails and communication would it be mostly business
24 or --

25 MS. DAVIDSON: No. It would be about the

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1 kids and I usually the house, you know, how they're
2 doing in school, their grades, you know, that kind of
3 stuff.

4 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: When is the pay check
5 coming?

6 MS. DAVIDSON: If they're doing what they're
7 supposed to be doing. Yes, he would always let me know
8 when the pay check was coming.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: I bet.

10 MS. DAVIDSON: You know, what had to be done
11 at the house. If I needed to order fuel or whatever
12 maintenance. He even, you know, kept track of all that
13 stuff from on the ship for me. So, you know, he was on
14 top of everything.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes. And was the e-
16 mail communication immediate where as soon as you type
17 it he would receive it or was there a bit of a delay?

18 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't really know.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay.

20 MS. DAVIDSON: I mean he usually didn't get
21 right back to me if that's what you're asking. I don't
22 know if it took a delay, if it took a while to go out
23 or not. I don't know.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. I just didn't
25 know if you noticed a few hour delay for the

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1 transmission because a lot of times either the ships
2 would collect all the e-mails in a batch and a batch
3 would get sent out or come back in or if it would be
4 just instant?

5 MS. DAVIDSON: I know that it happened on
6 the past on other ships but I'm not sure if it happened
7 on this one or not, honestly. I didn't sit right by
8 and wait for him to respond to me.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Got you. Something is
10 buzzing, sorry. And when you were able to communicate
11 in port that would be personal cell or text?

12 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

13 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And that was
14 frequently, like you said whenever he arrived, right?

15 MS. DAVIDSON: Every time he arrived in a
16 port he always told me. Same thing every time, arrived
17 safely, whichever port he was in always. And then
18 usually, you know, we would talk a little bit later
19 when he was free.

20 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Right, right. And
21 during the phone calls and I know same thing that you
22 said it's usually the husband telling we need oil, the
23 kids, blah, blah, blah. But was there ever any concern
24 about the job and say his position on the ship and how
25 he was treated by the company, any complaints or any

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1 say concerns he had with his position as captain?

2 MS. DAVIDSON: Well there was some concern
3 that he spoke to me about, about when he applied for
4 the new ship and that of the four captains who were,
5 you know, the two captains on the El Yunque and the two
6 captains on the El Faro, none of them were chosen for
7 the first one. And he did ask, he was, instead he was
8 offered a position on the, when the El Faro was going
9 to Alaska.

10 So they offered him that. But he did ask
11 why he didn't, wasn't chosen and he told me
12 specifically that Melissa Clark said she wasn't going
13 to discuss it with him. And he was a little frustrated
14 by that. But then afterwards he did sit for an
15 interview for the second one.

16 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: For the second LNG
17 ship?

18 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And do you know the
20 results of that?

21 MS. DAVIDSON: No, he never heard. I never
22 heard who they chose.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. So there really
24 wasn't a clear answer as to why he wasn't picked for
25 the first?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: No, they didn't, I think he
2 was a little frustrated that they didn't tell him why.
3 He just wanted to know, you know, this is what he told
4 me. He told me that he asked, you know, is there
5 something that, you know, you're looking for that I
6 don't have?

7 And they said no, not necessarily. Is there
8 something I could improve on? No, not necessarily.
9 Well what was it then? And she said I'm not going to
10 discuss that with you. So there wasn't, there were
11 some things with the company where there wasn't clear
12 communication that, you know, might have been a, you
13 know, a little frustrating.

14 But he would just, always would just go do
15 his job to the best of his ability and just, you know,
16 hope that another e-mail he sent me he said, you know,
17 I'm just going to keep doing what I do and the best I
18 can and, you know, see what happens.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And do you know about
20 when that decision was made or the --

21 MS. DAVIDSON: The first ship?

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes.

23 MS. DAVIDSON: That was a while ago. Not
24 this trip. It was before he had come, when he was out
25 the trip before, before he had come back from vacation.

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1 So that was quite a while ago. It wasn't this trip
2 about the first one.

3 MALE PARTICIPANT: In 2015?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: I'm sorry.

5 MALE PARTICIPANT: Some time in 2015 though?

6 MS. DAVIDSON: Right, right.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: This year some time but
8 not --

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes, earlier in the year.

10 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Earlier in the year.

11 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes.

12 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: What was his normal
13 rotation?

14 MS. DAVIDSON: About two months, you know,
15 70 days or so, 75 days.

16 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And was it pretty
17 steady ten weeks on ten weeks off or was it --

18 MS. DAVIDSON: Well sometimes it was jumbled
19 up a little bit depending on, you know, if the other
20 captain needed to be home for personal reasons or
21 whatever. So he did come back to work early this time
22 because Captain Eric left, well Michael thought he
23 asked for a leave of absence so he didn't know how long
24 he was going back for.

25 He thought it was a short little, so he

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1 didn't pack many things and I had to send him some
2 clothes and so but, yes, they didn't tell him how long
3 he was going to be there for.

4 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Really. So he went
5 back early.

6 MS. DAVIDSON: He went back early.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And did he actually
8 wind up staying longer then?

9 MS. DAVIDSON: He ended up staying until, he
10 ended up, he only was home about three weeks on his
11 vacation or maybe closer to four. So he was short on
12 his vacation and then he stayed and then he would have
13 gone into, I think it was just the beginning of his
14 rotation in October.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And when would that
16 trip, when would he have been relieved? Was there a
17 date that he would have been done or was it still up in
18 the air?

19 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know. He didn't tell
20 me. I didn't ask. He didn't really know.

21 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: He just didn't know.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: I did ask, you know, how long
23 are you going to be there for when it was, he first
24 went back early. There were some texts back and forth
25 between the two of us or e-mails. I'm not sure which

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1 it was and I said are they going to tell you?

2 And he said I asked. They didn't tell me.

3 I'm like, okay.

4 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And then I guess
5 typically if it was ten weeks did that trip go on more
6 then ten weeks then?

7 MS. DAVIDSON: From the amount of time he
8 started?

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Was actually aboard the
10 ship, yes. When he went back early.

11 MS. DAVIDSON: Well I'm not sure. He went
12 back in August. So and this was October 1st. So I
13 think he might have gone back the middle of August.

14 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: So probably close to
15 about ten weeks?

16 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes, right.

17 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And with really
18 no known vacation date, right?

19 MS. DAVIDSON: No. Well unless he knew and
20 he didn't tell me. I had asked him earlier. It wasn't
21 in October. It was probably maybe the end of August
22 when I asked him.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And was there anything
24 coming up say in October or November that you guys may
25 have been looking forward to or looking to get off the

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1 ship to go to, any event or anything, nothing?

2 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: It's tough when you
4 can't have a normal schedule. It's frustrating.

5 MS. DAVIDSON: We're used to it. That's how
6 it is.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes.

8 MS. DAVIDSON: And I don't worry too much
9 about it and he doesn't worry too much about it. If
10 you have to stay a little longer you do. That's how it
11 is.

12 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes.

13 MS. DAVIDSON: We don't stress about it
14 really.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes. How about on the
16 ship, did he have a normal, I know with a cargo ship
17 nothing is normal. But was there any sort of a normal
18 schedule on a day to day basis? Would he go to sleep
19 at a certain time every night or was it very random?

20 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know. I don't know.
21 I don't think I've ever asked him that.

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And do you know
23 if he was on any sort of medication or anything that
24 may have prevented him from sleeping normal or any
25 prescription medication that he was on?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: He didn't take any
2 prescriptions.

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: No health issues as far
4 as you know?

5 MS. DAVIDSON: Nothing, no. He had like a
6 little knee replacement surgery. It wasn't a
7 replacement. It was a little knee surgery on his, he
8 tore his patella maybe three or four years ago and
9 that's the only thing --

10 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's good.

11 MS. DAVIDSON: -- he's had in years and
12 years.

13 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes, and did he, when
14 he got out of Maine Maritime Academy did he have an
15 entire career of going to sea or did he ever take a
16 different job shore side anywhere?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: He's been shipping the entire
18 time.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: The whole time. And he
20 got out of Maine Maritime in --

21 MS. DAVIDSON: '88.

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: '88. And how long has
23 he been sailing captain?

24 MS. DAVIDSON: I think he started sailing
25 captain when he was with Crowley. I don't know the

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1 exact time of how long that has been.

2 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And has he sailed in
3 other positions other than captain for TOTE?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes, he started as third
5 mate. He took a job as third mate just to start with
6 TOTE.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And worked his way up
8 to captain?

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Well he went right from third
10 mate to captain because he's only been with TOTE for
11 three years.

12 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. At any time when
13 he was working for TOTE was he actively looking for
14 other shipping companies to work for?

15 MS. DAVIDSON: Michael has been actively
16 looking for other companies every time he worked for
17 any company.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay.

19 MS. DAVIDSON: So, yes, he was. He wanted,
20 his ultimate goal was to get on one of the new, you
21 know, LNG ships. I'm sure probably any captain wanted
22 to be on, you know. I don't think he's unique with
23 that.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes, yes. Do you know
25 if anybody from his ship had gotten selected to go to

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1 the new ships?

2 MS. DAVIDSON: I do know that a guy he was
3 friendly with, Ray Thompson, I think did. He was the
4 chief. Yes, Michael had thought that, I think, Michael
5 had mentioned it to me that he did. But I don't know
6 of anyone else.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And just coming back to
8 the previous question about looking for other ships and
9 companies and he was always doing that, was there any
10 reason that he wasn't happy with TOTE or is it just
11 normal for him to look for other ships all the time?

12 MS. DAVIDSON: Well he wanted to be on one
13 of the newer class ones if he could. I mean he would
14 take the job in Alaska. He has a lot of experience in
15 Alaska, has pilotage in Alaska.

16 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Does he.

17 MS. DAVIDSON: And he worked for years there
18 with ARCO and Polar. But he would have rather been on
19 a new one, a new ship. He was hopeful he was going to
20 get on, what he said was TOTE 2, the second one.

21 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: TOTE 2.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: He was still hopeful that,
23 you know, that would happen.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: So he did spend a lot
25 of time in Alaska previous to this?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: Right, he did. I've even
2 been up there twice with him.

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Really.

4 MS. DAVIDSON: Valdez.

5 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Do you have a ball park
6 time, about how many years ago was that just if you can
7 remember when you were out there too?

8 MS. DAVIDSON: Okay. Well he started, it
9 was his second job. He started with ARCO. So that
10 would have been, he was only with Texaco for a year so
11 it would have been '89. He started with ARCO. He was
12 with them for about 11 years and then ARCO switched
13 over, changed over to Polar and may have been about
14 another three years with Polar. I'm not sure.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And that was all out in
16 Alaska?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: That was all out of, yes, out
18 of Long Beach too, Valdez and Washington, all that
19 area.

20 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's a long time out
21 there.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay.

24 MS. DAVIDSON: And that's why he got his
25 pilotage there.

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1 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes, yes. And this is
2 probably a dumb question. But while he was out there
3 do you know if they ever had any rough weather? Did
4 you hear about it?

5 MS. DAVIDSON: They had lots of rough
6 weather.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay, just, so he's
8 handled ships in rough weather?

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Sure, yes.

10 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's where I was
11 going with that. And do you remember what position he
12 was in out there in Alaska? Was he third mate, second
13 mate, chief mate, captain?

14 MS. DAVIDSON: Well he started as third mate
15 and I think he went up to chief with Polar. I would
16 have to check.

17 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And what made
18 him go join and work with TOTE?

19 MS. DAVIDSON: Well he previously had
20 shipped with IAS, Interocean American Shipping and so
21 he worked on those ships and he knew some of the
22 personnel from there. Melissa Clark used to work, I
23 think Michael knew Melissa Clark from there.

24 And when he worked with, so he left the
25 Crowley ships because there was an incident where they

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1 were asking him to do something that was unsafe on the
2 ship as captain. They wanted him to take the ship from
3 one port to another port when he was told by, that the
4 steering wasn't safe.

5 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay.

6 MS. DAVIDSON: He told me that the Mercedes
7 Benz, I don't know people had come on and looked at the
8 equipment and said it was not safe, to not move it to
9 the other port. And the people in the office wanted
10 him to do it anyway.

11 And he said I'm not going to do that. So he
12 ordered two tugs to move the ship and when he came back
13 from vacation they weren't too happy with the bill and
14 told him he was no longer employed. So that's why he
15 took the third mate job with TOTE. That's why he ended
16 up over there.

17 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And did you ever hear
18 any problems like that with TOTE where he had issues
19 with the company giving him a hard time for any safety
20 reasons?

21 MS. DAVIDSON: No, no, he wouldn't have done
22 it if they asked him to.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Right, right. So he
24 left Crowley because of this steering problem/incident
25 and then went to TOTE as third mate.

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

2 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And do you know what
3 ship he started on? Was it one of the steam ships?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: With?

5 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: TOTE.

6 MS. DAVIDSON: TOTE, he was on the Pacific
7 tracker.

8 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Pacific.

9 MS. DAVIDSON: I think that one was only
10 like maybe two trips with the Pacific tracker or two
11 times out, whatever you call that.

12 MALE PARTICIPANT: Contracts.

13 MS. DAVIDSON: Okay.

14 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And then at some point
15 with TOTE after the Pacific job obviously he shifted
16 over to the Caribbean route. Did he go directly to El
17 Faro or maybe --

18 MS. DAVIDSON: No, he was on the El Morro.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: The El Morro. And that
20 was the one that they scrapped, right?

21 MS. DAVIDSON: Right, yes. He went over
22 there to, they needed some organization over there and
23 they needed to replace two of the captains and some of
24 the personnel and Michael told me that it was really
25 unorganized so he did a lot of work, you know,

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1 organizing getting everything, you know, so it was very
2 professional.

3 And just, he wanted things done correctly,
4 you know, by the book. Everything he did was by the
5 book.

6 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes, yes.

7 MS. DAVIDSON: He did that and then he took
8 that to the, they scrapped it.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: They scrapped it.

10 MS. DAVIDSON: He took it there and then he
11 went right to the El Faro.

12 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And I know again this
13 is kind of when I was on my ship I wouldn't tell my
14 wife a lot of what happened out there. You know, it's
15 you always want to protect the ones you love.

16 But did he ever give you any sort of
17 indication as to the condition of the El Faro? Did he
18 say boy this thing is a wonderful ship? This is a
19 piece of junk. I mean how did he portray that ship to
20 you?

21 MS. DAVIDSON: Well he didn't really talk
22 about the ship in general but he did send me a text one
23 time and said that there was propulsion and gyro
24 issues. It was in the end of August.

25 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay.

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: And that the main server was
2 down.

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: The computer server?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes, right. And so they got
5 into, you know, port a little late that time because of
6 that. But that's the only time I can think of that, he
7 didn't, I didn't know how old the ship was. He didn't
8 tell me.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Right, right. When he,
10 the propulsion issue, again, I know with the captains
11 they just think things magically happen down in the
12 engine room. They have no idea what's going on. But
13 when they say propulsion issues was there any more
14 description or --

15 MS. DAVIDSON: No, that was it, that was it.

16 MALE PARTICIPANT: He just yelled at the
17 chief.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's more like it.
19 Get those squirrels running down there. You know,
20 that's typically what happens, you know. As an
21 engineer that's what I expected to hear.

22 But anything related to the safety of the
23 ship? Did he say anything like, you know, I have holes
24 in the hull or there's water leaking here or anything
25 you might have heard about the --

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

2 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: -- safety aspect of the
3 ship or anything?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

5 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Typically onboard ships
6 we do life boat drills every week. Anything, again is
7 there anything he might have passed on to you about the
8 life boats or how they operated?

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Nothing about how they
10 operated. But I remember him doing, mentioning that
11 they were doing some, you know, doing a drill. And I
12 knew he had one time some people on there and they were
13 doing, I don't know if it was the Coast Guard.

14 I can't remember who it was. There was like
15 a two week period where he had some people on there and
16 they were doing some things but I don't know what it
17 was.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Right, right. And how
19 about his crew. I mean obviously everybody works for
20 the captain. Did he ever say to you this chief is
21 great, this chief mate is a bum? I mean did you ever
22 get any sort of indication as to what kind of crew he
23 was working with?

24 MS. DAVIDSON: I think he thought he had a
25 great crew.

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1 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Anybody specifically
2 that may have been called out to you like as good or
3 bad? Anybody that he said I really like this chief
4 mate. He's really good or can you remember?

5 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't think he's really
6 said that anyone was really great, no.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And any problems with
8 anybody that maybe he had to fire or reprimand?

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes, he did tell me about one
10 time people had like a falling out and Michael did have
11 to fire someone who threatened another employee. And
12 then another guy didn't come back to the ship when he
13 was supposed to come back.

14 I'm not sure if he got fired or what. But
15 those are the only two things I can think of offhand.

16 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's typical, yes,
17 typical especially guys go to sea they just, they get
18 carried away. They don't come back. These things
19 happen. But how about any strong friendships. Did he
20 have any buddies he hung out with from the ship or from
21 TOTE, anybody he confided in?

22 MS. DAVIDSON: The only one he ever
23 mentioned was Ray.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Ray. And they worked
25 together onboard the ship. Did they communicate

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1 afterwards at all?

2 MS. DAVIDSON: Last --

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Like when he was on
4 vacation.

5 MS. DAVIDSON: Well last March they were
6 going to a leadership class, they went to a leadership
7 class together at the AMO. I think it's in Florida.

8 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Dania.

9 MS. DAVIDSON: Dania. And his wife went and
10 I was supposed to go but my brother passed, my brother
11 was in Hospice so I didn't end up getting to go. So I
12 never got to meet Ray or his wife. But he was the only
13 one he really talked about, Ray that I can remember.

14 I mean he had a lot friends. He was always
15 talking to different guys but I, a lot of them I never
16 met. You know, they're not from Maine.

17 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: It's too bad. They're
18 not real Mainers right. You doing all right? You need
19 a break or anything?

20 MS. DAVIDSON: I'm okay.

21 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Not too hard questions
22 yet?

23 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I think I'm all right.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: That's good, yes. How
25 about, so it seemed like he had a good crew. Not too

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1 many concerns with the ship or none at all. But how
2 about the company itself, TOTE, how did he portray the
3 way he was treated and say managed by the company?

4 Did he ever complain about the way the
5 company treated him?

6 MS. DAVIDSON: Only when he didn't get the
7 answers that he wanted that I mentioned earlier. That
8 was the only thing he ever said.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: When it comes to the
10 new ship?

11 MS. DAVIDSON: Right. Just wondering why.
12 But he thought he would, you know, he was hopeful that
13 he was one of the forerunners for the second one. So I
14 don't think he was too worried about it. He didn't
15 complain about anything else. He really wasn't
16 complaining because he really thought he would be on
17 the second one and if not he had the job in Alaska.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: When the El Faro went
19 over to Alaska he would remain there?

20 MS. DAVIDSON: They offered him that
21 position.

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Captain's job?

23 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And how about on the
25 day to day operation of TOTE managing the ship, would

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1 he have to communicate to the company and do you know
2 like maybe who he reported to if there was anybody?

3 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know who he reported
4 to. I know he had a lot of e-mails all the time going
5 back and forth to the company but I don't know who they
6 were to.

7 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And I know
8 there's not a lot that, you're not involved with the
9 day to day operation.

10 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

11 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: But just again if he
12 might have mentioned something to do said, I've got to
13 talk to this guy John or Tim or whatever just all the
14 time. He's always, just wanted to know if there was
15 anybody in particular that seemed to be a direct report
16 that he would communicate with.

17 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. Did he ever say
19 anything on how much cargo they carried? Anything
20 saying boy they get more and more cargo the ships are
21 carrying or less and less or anything?

22 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I just know there were
23 cars and containers on there.

24 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And when it comes to
25 quantity of anything?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

2 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: How about his schedule.
3 Did he ever say that he was getting pushed to meet a
4 certain schedule, that he had to be in Puerto Rico on
5 time or --

6 MS. DAVIDSON: No. Even when he was late in
7 August he didn't say anything about any issue.

8 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And that's one
9 of the things we're looking into is was there any push
10 that he was getting pressure to meet a schedule.

11 MS. DAVIDSON: He never said anything like
12 that.

13 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And we do know in
14 August that there was a change of course I think
15 because of weather and again that's, there was no
16 retribution or any problem from the company when they
17 decided to change course?

18 MS. DAVIDSON: I didn't even really know he
19 changed course until after October 1st, to be honest.

20 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. I've got you,
21 yes. It seemed, from what we understand is that the
22 big push was to get the ship southbound because they
23 were carrying so many refrigerated containers to get to
24 Puerto Rico and on the way back there was a little
25 extra time in the schedule because there wasn't as much

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1 cargo coming up.

2 There was one time that when they did leave
3 Puerto Rico they left with one boiler and they got
4 permission to do it from Coast Guard. Does it ring a
5 bell? Did you ever hear anything about leaving a port
6 with only one boiler? Does that ever ring a bell what
7 you've heard?

8 MS. DAVIDSON: I'm not sure where I heard it
9 from. I'm not sure if I heard it after all of this or,
10 when Michael sent me the text about losing propulsion
11 he said they had to shut down the boilers. Is that the
12 same time? The end of August, like the 24th, last
13 week.

14 MALE PARTICIPANT: The communication about
15 shutting down the boilers was after they had gotten
16 into port. Is that right? Is that what you recall?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: It may have been in that
18 same, the same time when he said the propulsion but I'm
19 not sure. I would have to go back and look at my texts
20 and e-mails.

21 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. And with the
22 whole question about the boilers there were five Polish
23 laborers aboard the ship. Again, was there any mention
24 that your husband might have said what they were
25 actually doing aboard the ship?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: I didn't even know they were
2 on there.

3 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. I think for
4 right now I was going to stop with my questions and
5 maybe turn over to [REDACTED] and I'll take a break and
6 review my notes but thank you very much. I appreciate
7 your --

8 MS. DAVIDSON: You're welcome.

9 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: -- help so far. You
10 need a coffee or a water?

11 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I'm all right.

12 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay, thanks. Go
13 ahead, [REDACTED]

14 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, this is [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
15 with the Coast Guard. Just a couple of follow ups.
16 Did you ever use personal e-mail to communicate with
17 your husband?

18 MS. DAVIDSON: My e-mail.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Right, I mean did he ever use
20 like his wireless device to send and receive e-mails to
21 you outside of the ship's e-mail system on his own
22 personal account?

23 MS. DAVIDSON: No, he would send it from the
24 ship. He would just, if he was going to use his, he
25 didn't use his own personal to talk to me, no. It was

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1 either the ship or a text or a phone call.

2 MR. [REDACTED] And then those texts that you
3 mentioned the one about the boiler issues and the
4 server issues and so forth, did you retain those texts?
5 Do you have those still?

6 MS. DAVIDSON: I do, yes.

7 MR. [REDACTED] We may talk to you about
8 seeing those. They would be very helpful and also
9 establishing the date which we're trying to get.

10 MS. DAVIDSON: All right.

11 MR. [REDACTED] So as a crew member family
12 member did you have any instructions how to contact the
13 ship if you had a shore emergency? In other words, did
14 you have access to like the SAT phone number that you
15 could call in like a dire emergency to contact the
16 ship?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: I never did. I think his
18 number was on the bottom of, it was attached to his e-
19 mail that he sent out from the ship. I think the phone
20 number of the ship was on there but I never had, I
21 never needed to.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Did TOTE ever provide to you
23 as a family member like here's a communications
24 protocol just in case you have to reach the ship in an
25 emergency?

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1 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

2 MR. [REDACTED] Some easy to understand way to
3 do that?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

5 MR. [REDACTED] And I know that a lot of
6 families, you know, they're sick of hearing about, you
7 know, their husband or wife's job and so forth. They
8 get barraged. So I'm just going to ask you a couple of
9 questions.

10 One of them is like do you know, like
11 related to the ship what the safety management system
12 is?

13 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

14 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And how about anything
15 related to like voyage planning?

16 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I don't.

17 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And that's just so I
18 can understand, you know, like did Captain Davidson
19 talk to you all the time about the ship?

20 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

21 MR. [REDACTED] I'm guessing that.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

23 MR. [REDACTED] Did he talk to you about his
24 concerns for hurricane seasons down in the Caribbean?

25 MS. DAVIDSON: No, no. He didn't. The one

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1 time I brought up a Hurricane Erica when I had heard
2 about it on the news. But, you know, Michael has been
3 sailing for so long that I don't really, he was so
4 capable that I wasn't worried about anything.

5 I mean he was, he used to sail all over the
6 place and I never worried about it foreign and, you
7 know. If I watched for every little thing every time
8 he went out.

9 MR. [REDACTED] Did he ever mention that there
10 was an instrument on the ship for measuring the wind
11 direction and speed and there were any problems with
12 that? The ship has a device called an anemometer and
13 it's used to measure wind speed and direction. Did he
14 ever say anything to you about that maybe not working?

15 MS. DAVIDSON: No, the only thing he ever
16 mentioned was the gyro because that, I don't know what
17 that is.

18 MR. [REDACTED] That's the compass, electrical
19 compass to steer the ship. We asked you about loading
20 the ship for cargo and stability and there were no
21 comments about the ship was heavily loaded or properly
22 loaded or anything like that?

23 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

24 MR. [REDACTED] We interviewed the second
25 mate, the navigator, Charlie Baird. He's a guy from up

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1 here in Maine and he was the second mate on the voyage
2 in late August where they took the, you know, the ship
3 kind of looked like it was on railroad tracks that went
4 back and forth between Jacksonville and San Juan, back
5 and forth.

6 And then on the August voyage the ship made
7 a change. They came down the coast of Florida because
8 of Hurricane Erica, which you mentioned and then came
9 over the top of Cuba and into San Juan. And one of the
10 duties of the second mate, Charlie Baird was to give
11 the voyage plan.

12 Did Captain Davidson ever talk about Charlie
13 Baird?

14 MS. DAVIDSON: He may have. I don't
15 remember.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Because on the accident voyage
17 Charlie Baird had sent him a text message directly to
18 Captain Davidson saying hey, you know the storm is out
19 there. What are you going to do? What's your plan?
20 Captain Davidson responded and then Charlie Baird
21 suggested that there were alternate routes available
22 and then basically to characterize it, you know, that
23 was the end of, generally the end of the conversation.

24 So it sounded like Charlie Baird was a Maine
25 guy. They might have had a, you know, good working

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1 relationship and we're trying to understand why they
2 took that deviation in August.

3 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know.

4 MR. [REDACTED] We asked you about like safety
5 concerns. Did he ever voice anything about, like any
6 repairs that were needed to the ship that were delayed
7 or postponed?

8 MS. DAVIDSON: No. I don't think Michael
9 would have taken a ship out if he knew it needed
10 repairs. He wasn't that kind of, he was too safety
11 conscious himself. He wouldn't have done it.

12 MR. [REDACTED] And then did he ever talk to
13 you about Captain Axelson (phonetic), that Captain
14 Axelson left or resigned and Captain Davidson had to
15 come back because of that? Did he say any reasons why
16 Captain Axelson might have left TOTE's employment?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: He wasn't really sure why. I
18 did ask him if he, he said that he was told for
19 personal reasons. But, you know, I don't know.

20 MR. [REDACTED] And did he ever mention like
21 filing a grievance with the union? Did Captain
22 Davidson ever talk about that because he wasn't
23 selected for one of the new ships?

24 MS. DAVIDSON: He told me that he felt that
25 they were looking for someone in their forties, it was

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1 an age thing and not someone of his age in the fifties
2 and that's why they hadn't offered the job to any of
3 the captains who were already there, who were older.

4 MR. [REDACTED] Did he ever talk about, for
5 example, TOTE second guessing his decisions because one
6 of the important things we're doing in this
7 investigation is trying to find out the decisions
8 people made. And in the interviews we conducted in
9 Jacksonville just to characterize them they, you know,
10 TOTE basically said hey, we hire the captains.

11 We give them broad discretion and they run
12 the ships. And so what I'm trying to understand is if
13 TOTE provided oversight for the masters as you
14 understand it?

15 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know.

16 MR. [REDACTED] Did he ever talk about being
17 evaluated by the company, like an annual evaluation or
18 performance review or anything similar to that?

19 MS. DAVIDSON: Not formally. But he did
20 tell me that some people from the company had come on
21 the ship and they told him what a great job he was
22 doing and really thought that it was, you know, the
23 ship was really up to par and they were very, very
24 happy with everything.

25 MR. [REDACTED] Did he, I know that Brian

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1 asked you before, but did he ever say and maybe you've
2 already answered it but who he reported to, who was his
3 boss?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I don't know who it was.

5 MR. [REDACTED] And did he ever say like
6 within TOTE who would be like responsible for the
7 nautical operations?

8 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

9 MR. [REDACTED] And then did, a lot of us
10 keep, you know, like personal record books. For
11 example, you carry a green book around in your back
12 pocket and you make a lot of notes about shipboard
13 operations. Did he keep any kind of records like that?

14 MS. DAVIDSON: He was very, very much into
15 keeping records. He wrote everything down, everything.
16 He even made like a whole computer program to organize
17 everything on the ship so that when he went to one of
18 the ships, I think it was the El Morro the record
19 keeping wasn't so great.

20 So he made sure that everything was written
21 down, everything was, you know, easily accessible for
22 when, you know, certificates came up or inspections or
23 everything. He was like that at home. He kept a, we
24 call it a man journal. Every day he wrote down what he
25 did every day.

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1 MR. [REDACTED] And did he retain copies of
2 those like the shipboard operations notes at home?

3 MS. DAVIDSON: No, no, he didn't take those
4 home.

5 MR. [REDACTED] And did he have, you know, his
6 own computer on the ship?

7 MS. DAVIDSON: He had a laptop on the ship.
8 I don't know what else he had on the ship.

9 MR. [REDACTED] That was his?

10 MS. DAVIDSON: Right.

11 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. And do you just know
12 offhand if that kind of stuff, like one of the great
13 technologies today is like cloud storage where a lot of
14 your documents get put up into the, wherever cloud
15 storage is. Do you know if that computer was like a
16 Mac that might have had cloud storage?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't think it was a Mac.
18 I don't remember what it was though.

19 MR. [REDACTED] Do you know if his personal e-
20 mail account was like a Gmail account or --

21 MS. DAVIDSON: It was a Gmail, yes.

22 MR. [REDACTED] Okay. That's all I have for
23 now.

24 MS. DAVIDSON: Okay.

25 MR. [REDACTED] Thank you very much.

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1 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: We'll go to Alaska now.
2 Maybe it's a little cooler there than this room. But,
3 Mike, if you're available to ask some, any questions.

4 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: No, I think you've
5 covered them all that I was going to ask. Great job.
6 Thank you, Ms. Davidson. Thanks so much for your
7 information, for providing the information.

8 And actually one slight question. So no
9 grievance, your husband did not file a grievance with
10 AMO for not getting the masters job on the new ship?

11 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't think it was filed
12 but I'm not certain.

13 INVESTIGATOR KUCHARSKI: Okay, great. Thank
14 you so much. That's it.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: This is Brian Young
16 with the NTSB. Just two follow up questions. I know
17 with Crowley he didn't take a ship out because of a
18 steering problem.

19 Did you ever hear of a time with TOTE that
20 there was any reason that he may not have left on a
21 scheduled departure because of any reasons, safety
22 reasons or propulsion issues or anything that he did
23 not go when expected?

24 MS. DAVIDSON: No.

25 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And do you know if

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1 there were ever any say letters of warning or letters
2 of reprimand from TOTE against your husband for any
3 reason, any infractions or anything?

4 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't think so. They were,
5 he told me they were really, really happy with the work
6 that he did especially when he came over to the El
7 Morro and really got that up to par.

8 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And did El Faro need
9 that kind of attention too?

10 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know. I just know he
11 continued with, you know, he did everything by the book
12 and had it highly organized. He was very, very
13 organized.

14 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Before Captain Axelson
15 resigned was he a steady relief, kind of baseball on
16 the job for a while?

17 MS. DAVIDSON: He was.

18 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Would you say for the
19 entire time that they were aboard the El Faro, was it a
20 constant --

21 MS. DAVIDSON: As far as I know.

22 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: They were steady back
23 and forth?

24 MS. DAVIDSON: Yes.

25 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Okay. Believe it or

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1 not that's all the questions I have.

2 MS. DAVIDSON: Okay.

3 MR. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the Coast
4 Guard. I just have a couple of follow ups. One, do
5 you know if Captain Davidson applied for a position as
6 a San Juan pilot?

7 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know. I think he
8 probably would have had to get his pilotage first and
9 he didn't have it.

10 MR. [REDACTED] Okay.

11 MS. DAVIDSON: I'm sure he was probably
12 thinking that in the back of his mind because he had to
13 have his licenses for everything, you know.

14 MR. [REDACTED] How about, did he mention any
15 cargo damage coming back from a trip or contacting you
16 after a voyage say that, you know, and it doesn't have
17 to be a hurricane but we had a storm at sea and some
18 containers got damaged or some vehicles broke lose or
19 anything like that?

20 MS. DAVIDSON: I know he mentioned it. I
21 couldn't tell you when, if it was for this company or
22 another company. But sure that kind of stuff happens.

23 MR. [REDACTED] Did he ever send you
24 photographs whether they're, you know, like text
25 message photographs or photographs from voyages he was

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1 on to show you interesting things that occurred?

2 MS. DAVIDSON: No. I mean we would FaceTime
3 when he was in his office. But that's the only part of
4 the ship I saw.

5 MR. [REDACTED] And then, you know, we're
6 working very hard to make sure we cover every single
7 angle involved with this accident. Are there any
8 friends or associates that might be helpful for us to
9 talk to that we might not have considered?

10 MS. DAVIDSON: With TOTE or just in --

11 MR. [REDACTED] Well that could shed some
12 light on, you know, this accident, friends of Captain
13 Davidson's or people that he associated with that he
14 might have talked to?

15 MS. DAVIDSON: I don't know that, Michael
16 was friendly with one of the San Juan pilots, Robert
17 Candelario (phonetic). He did send a condolence text
18 to me. Do you want names outside of TOTE or just --

19 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, I mean, you know, all of
20 us have friends that we talk to. I'm just thinking,
21 I'm not just talking about a list of friends. Anybody
22 that he might have talked to about shipping on the
23 vessels or anything like that.

24 MS. DAVIDSON: Right, well he had, he was
25 very friendly with Wayne Brandenberger (phonetic). He

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1 used to work with, at ARCO. I can't think of the name
2 of the company it is now. Captain Wells used to work
3 with ARCO too but I think the two of them work
4 somewhere together.

5 MR. [REDACTED] What was the second one?

6 MS. DAVIDSON: Captain Wells. I don't
7 remember his first name. And let's see, Alex Ramirez
8 worked with him at Crowley and what's the captain,
9 Scott, I think it's Wiegand, W-I-E-G-L-A-N-D, W-I-E-G-
10 A-N-D, I think is his last name. I think he was one of
11 the other captains at Crowley.

12 And he had, you know, friends here at home.
13 Jimmy Griffin is on the, I think he's still on the
14 Maine responder, Portland. And Cedric Harkins works
15 for MERSC (phonetic). He's a chief engineer for MERSC.
16 He lives in Windham too and graduated with Michael. Is
17 that enough?

18 MR. [REDACTED] Yes, that's fine. I'm just
19 trying to make sure we cover all the bases and make
20 sure we get all the information. Thank you very much.

21 MS. DAVIDSON: You're welcome.

22 MR. [REDACTED] That's all I have.

23 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And if, Brian Young
24 with the NTSB again. But if there's anything you have
25 questions for us or anything that we didn't ask you

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1 that you feel may assist us in this investigation feel
2 free to let us have it. But if you have any questions
3 now or at any point down the road you have our contact
4 information.

5 But if you do have any questions for us,
6 whatever we can help answer for your we're more than
7 happy to.

8 MS. DAVIDSON: Like the other family members
9 we just want to know what happened.

10 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: And that's what we want
11 to as well. You know, we appreciate your talking to us
12 and telling us what you've heard and what you've seen.
13 So we really appreciate your time.

14 MS. DAVIDSON: You're welcome.

15 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: Yes, thank you. No
16 questions for us? We've been firing questions at you.

17 MS. DAVIDSON: I know I can't think of
18 anything offhand.

19 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: It's your turn now.
20 But please feel free to contact us at any time, any of
21 you, whatever we can do to help you.

22 MS. DAVIDSON: No, I just want to know what
23 happened because it is very hard on my daughters and I
24 to hear crazy things that the press says that, you
25 know, that Michael was risky when he couldn't be any

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1 farther from the truth of how he was. It's ridiculous
2 and it's hard for us to listen to so we would like to
3 know what happened.

4 INVESTIGATOR YOUNG: All right. I think
5 we're all set and we'll conclude the interview
6 officially on the recording.

7 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
8 off the record.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: El Faro Incident
Accident No. DCA16MM001
Interview of: Theresa Davidson
Portland, Maine

DATE: 01-05-16

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 49 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

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Office of Marine Safety
Transcript Errata

Matter: El Faro
Ref Nbr: DCA16MM001

Dear Ms. Davidson:

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the transcript of interview for Theresa Davidson taken on 1/5/2016. Kindly review this transcript for accuracy and provide corrections, if any, in the attached table.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

1/12/2016

Brian Young
Major Marine Accident Investigator

TABLE OF CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW FOR
Theresa Davidson

TAKEN ON

January 5, 2016

PAGE NUMBER	LINE NUMBER	CURRENT WORDING	CORRECTED WORDING
2		Greg Linsin, Esq.	Gregory F. Linsin, Esq., Blank Rome LLP
4	14-15	obviously deck related	obviously are deck related
8	16-17	Was it his own?	Add: He also sent emails via his personal g-mail account regarding personal matters.
38	13	Axelson	Axelsson
38	14	Axelson	Axelsson
38	16	Axelson	Axelsson
41	17-18	I don't remember what it was though	Add: It was a Dell laptop.
43	14	Axelson	Axelsson
46	15	MERSC	Maersk

If, to the best of your knowledge, no corrections are needed kindly circle the statement "no corrections needed" and initial in the space provided.

NO CORRECTIONS NEEDED.

Initials

Printed Name of Person providing the above information

Date

1/22/16
Date

OMS Transcript Errata 5.27.15



Phone: 202-772-5813
Fax: 202-572-1402
Email: Linsin@Blankrome.com

January 22, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Thomas K. Roth-Roffy, P.E.
Investigator-in-Charge
NTSB, Office of Marine Safety
490 L'Enfant Plaze East, S.W.
Washington, DC 20594

Re: *S/S EL FARO*: Transcript of the Interview of Theresa Davidson

Dear Mr. Roth-Roffy:

We represent Mrs. Theresa Davidson, the wife of Captain Michael Davidson, in connection with the civil litigation related to the loss of the *El Faro* and the investigations concerning that casualty being conducted by the National Transportation Safety Board ("NTSB") and the U.S. Coast Guard. In connection with the ongoing investigations, Mrs. Davidson was interviewed by Mr. Brain Young, Mr. Mike Kucharski, and Mr. [REDACTED], on January 5, 2016. As requested by Mr. Young, in his letter dated January 12, 2016, Theresa Davidson has reviewed the draft transcript of her interview and submits the attached corrections.

Mrs. Davidson understands the importance of the NTSB's investigation in this matter and wishes to express her family's appreciation to the NTSB not only for its ongoing work to locate the wreckage of the vessel and to investigate the causes of the casualty, but also its efforts to provide the family members of the crew with updates concerning key developments of the investigation. Mrs. Davidson recognizes that the NTSB is committed to conducting a thorough, professional investigation of the casualty and thereafter providing the results of its investigation, including the witness interview transcripts, to the public.

Because of the importance of this investigation and the need to ensure that the investigative record, particularly the witness interview transcripts, faithfully reflect the information provided to the NTSB by the *witnesses* themselves, we are very concerned by the fact that the transcript of Mrs. Davidson's interview contains a series of opinions, comments, and personal perspectives provided by the investigator. The statements in question are listed below. While we do not believe that these statements were made by the investigator for any improper motive, we strongly believe that they do not belong in the official transcript of Mrs. Davidson's interview. We are concerned

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Thomas K. Roth-Roffy, P.E.
January 22, 2016
Page 2

that the referenced statements, which do not reflect Mrs. Davidson's opinions, comments, or personal perspective, could nonetheless be unfairly attributed to or associated with her testimony. For this reason, we respectfully request that each of the following statements be fully redacted from the transcript before it is put in final form.

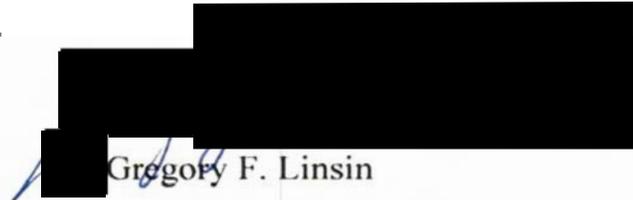
Specifically, we request that that following language be redacted from Theresa Davidson's, January 5, 2016 transcript:

- Investigator Young: *"I'm the guy in the engine room who just gets yelled at by the captain typically. So that's my function as the engineering."* (Page 4; Lines 18-20).
- Investigator Young: *"Just from my personal background a lot of times when I was out on the ship my wife and I would communicate frequently via the e-mail, the cell phones and whatever technology we had."* (Page 7; Lines 10-13).
- Investigator Young: *"I remember when I used to sail I had a, they called it chief engineer at blah, blah, blah. I had my own e-mail address."* (Page 8; Lines 10-13).
- Investigator Young: *"And during the phone calls and I know same thing that you said it's usually the husband telling we need oil, the kids, blah, blah, blah."* (Page 10; Lines 20-23).
- Investigator Young: *"It's tough when you can't have a normal schedule. It's frustrating."* (Page 16; Lines 3-4).
- Investigator Young: *"And I know again this is kind of when I was on my ship I wouldn't tell my wife a lot of what happened out there. You know, it's you always want to protect the ones you love."* (Page 24; Lines 12-15).
- Investigator Young: *"again, I know with the captains they just think things magically happen down in the engine room. They have no idea what's going on."* (Page 25; Lines 10-12).
- Male Participant: *"He just yelled at the chief."* (Page 25; Lines 16-17).
- Investigator Young: *"That's more like it. Get those squirrels running down there. You know, that's typically what happens, you know. As an engineer that's what I expected to hear."* (Page 25; Lines 18-21).
- Investigator Young: *"That's typical, yes, typical especially guys go to sea they just, they get carried away. They don't come back. These things happen."* (Page 27; Lines 16-19).

Thomas K. Roth-Roffy, P.E.
January 22, 2016
Page 3

Thank you in advance for your willingness to consider Mrs. Davidson's request for redaction of these extraneous statements from her transcript. Mrs. Davidson acknowledges that there is legitimate public interest in understanding the cause or causes of the loss of the El Faro and its crew, and that these objectives can be achieved by ensuring the evidentiary record developed is as robust and as comprehensive as possible, with respect to relevant information provided by the *witnesses*. Redaction of the above referenced language supports these critical objectives.

Sincerely,


Gregory F. Linsin

cc: Theresa Davidson
Brian Young, *NTSB, Major Marine Accident Investigator*